

DRAFT FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Caron, Chair
John DiPasquale
Mike DiPietro
Paul Fontaine, Jr.
Kristin Sweeney
Andrew Van Hazinga

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Hurley
Laura O’Kane (Assoc. Member)

PLANNING OFFICE: Mike O’Hara

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:05 p.m. at Fitchburg State University, Hammond Hall, Room S-08.

Meeting Minutes

Action on minutes deferred.

ANR plans

Sulin, Fisher Rd.

Resubdivision of parcels to make house lots at #861 & 865 Fisher Road larger. No new lots are being created. The Board noted a typo on one of the notes on the plan - - incorrect zoning dimensional requirements (from another community). Motion made & seconded to authorize Mike O’Hara to endorse the plan on their behalf, once the corrections have been made and the plan re-submitted. Vote in favor.

Mahon (Edgewater Development), Farmer Ave.

Three lots to be split off from a 2 acre parcel with existing dwelling (45 Farmer Ave.) Lot sizes are min. 20,000 sq. ft. each. Last month the Conservation Commission determined that a 3,000 +/- sq. ft. area of “Isolated Land Subject to Flooding” on one of the lots was not large enough to be under their jurisdiction. Approx. 10 years ago Farmer Ave. had been extended in front of this parcel and three dwellings were built by the same builder on the westerly side of the street. The Board endorsed the plan.

Evergreen Realty Trust, Franklin Rd.

This item had been continued from last month. Bill Hannigan, Hannigan Engineering & Peter Bovezni of the Realty Trust present. Peter explained to the Board that the only purpose of the lot split was to convey the built portion to the condo association. He plans to build out the rest of the units in the Chamberlain Hill development as it had been originally permitted. Everything else stays the same. The Board agreed to endorse the plan.

33 Apple Tree Hill Realty Trust, Marshall St.

Two conforming frontage lots, min. 10,000 sq. ft., proposed between #119 & 143 Marshall St. Remaining land is 13 acres & has frontage on Apple Tree Hill. The Board endorsed the plan.

MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Special Permit - Mixed Used Planned Unit Development (residential & commercial) 579 South St., Gionet (cont'd from 7/11/16)

Via email that afternoon, the applicant's engineer had requested that this item be postponed to the following meeting since two members who had participated in the previous sessions of the hearing were not present.

Motion made & seconded to postpone the hearing to the October 18th meeting. Vote in favor.

Special Permit - medical marijuana cultivation/processing facility, 25 Newport St. - Compassionate Organics (cont'd from 8/16/16) Request to Withdraw

After last month's meeting, Compassionate Organics had emailed a request to withdraw their application. Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. DiPietro) to give the application Leave to Withdraw.

Vote unanimous in favor.

Compassionate Organics may be re-applying in the future when another location is found. Also, there may be a different MMJ applicant for the 25 Newport St. site in the future.

Site Plan Review, Research Results, 9,000 sq. ft. office bldg., 915 South St.

Hearing opened. Plan had been rec'd that afternoon. Jamie Rheault, Whitman & Bingham presented plan. Applicant looked into several scenarios of renovation of former building, but none worked as well as demo and a new bldg. They're keeping same general footprint as the building that was just demolished, and the existing driveway on Wanoosnoc Rd., although d/w to be relocated a bit further uphill. Will be a three-story bldg. Approx. 5,000 sq. ft. of landscaping will be provided & 36 parking spaces.

There's an existing 20-foot wide ROW at the rear of this parcel for access to adjacent businesses, but actual access is not within the ROW. Jamie stated this easement will be revised to reflect the actual physical access to the adjacent parcel.

Main entrance to bldg. would be at rear, off parking lot. Screened dumpster will be at rear of building. Site lighting will be 'Dark Sky' compliant.

Public Comment:

John Cordio, 360 Wanoosnoc Rd. - # of employees? 28. John asked about a "Traffic Entering" sign on Wanoosnoc Rd between the dentist & Research Results, in order to warn drivers. He also asked about a separate left turn phase at the signal from Wanoosnoc turning north up South St. This can be pursued w/ DPW.

June Allen, South St., abutter to the north – had some comments about their continued access through this lot to Wanoosnoc Rd.

Discussion about appearance of South St. side of building, since that will be the side seen by most people. Board wants to improve that appearance – not have it look like the rear of a building.

Discussion about width of existing sidewalk on front of site. There's no sidewalk on Wanoosnoc Rd., a very narrow sidewalk on South St. Could South St. sidewalk be widened to have safer pedestrian access?

Board also would like the loading area off Wanoosnoc near intersection removed, if it's not needed. Jamie showed it b/c there was an existing driveway there. It will be replaced with a grassed area.

Ms. DiNinno: Likes plan, it improves appearance of area. They had to recharge groundwater when dental office built, why not do that here? Jamie explained they are matching pre- & post-development runoff here, unlike with DiNinno site.

Time frame? They'd like to get foundation in ground in November and frame building over the winter. Still need comments from different departments.

Motion made & seconded to continue hearing to the October 18th meeting. Vote in favor.

Site Plan Review, Moses, 4,000 sq. ft. office bldg., 960 South St.
Item deferred to next month's meeting since site plan not yet submitted.

OTHER BUSINESS

Informal discussion - CAS Foundation, Medical Marijuana cultivation, One Oak Hill Road

Present were Bert Vining, CAS foundation, Cal Goldsmith & Kyle Burchard of GPR Engineering, and Atty. Donovan. Bert discussed purpose of the CAS Foundation. They are proposing to lease 70,000 sq. ft. on two floors in the Anwelt Mill (formerly occupied the North Central Charter School). They may expand into the other two floors of that wing and the central portion of the building.

There will be no home deliveries from this location. Deliveries will only be coming from their retail locations. They plan have 20 employees to start and increase to 40. He's planning to have an informational meeting on Oct. 14th for the residents of the adjacent Anwelt Senior housing.

Cal gave overview of preliminary site plan. There will be some modifications to the bldg. Two loading docks at the rear of the building. A large CO2 tank will be installed outside the building and screened. CO2 is used for cultivation & processing. They have been discussions w/ city about drainage issue at bottom of Oak Hill Rd. Building must be made waterproof. First floor windows are boarded up and painted now for security. Board suggested that the appearance of them be improved in the final design.

CAS will need waivers from the Board of the 300-foot setback requirement in the MMJ Ordinance from residential use (Anwelt Heritage Apts.) and possibly from the Cleghorn Nbhd. Center and other areas where minors congregate.

Atty. Pusateri, City Solicitor: CAS Foundation has entered into a Host Community Agreement with the City to offset the potential effects of the use. Bert: CAS is making an \$8 million investment.

DPW- Wastewater re: Assessment of Infiltration & Inflow Fee

Jeff Murawski, DPW-Wastewater discussed the I & I issue with Board as outlined in a 9/13/16 memo to the Board. Fitchburg is obligated to remove I & I from the sewer system as part of the DEP Consent decree and because it's good engineering practice.

Discussion on how to accomplish this with new projects that go before the Planning Board. It could be done case by case, though conditions of Planning Board approvals, or by amending the Board's regulations or through a general City Code requirement. The Board thought that a general City Code amendment, applicable to more situations, would be more effective than just the projects that come before the Planning Board.

Jeff will investigate this & have further discussion with the Board about possible conditions to include in future Planning Board decisions.

Eric Dubrule, 44 Oliver St. - concept plan

Eric discussed with Board a concept plan for re-use of former dentist office at 42-44 Oliver St. He has tried for a few years to get tenants for the commercial space (vacant dentist office) on 1st floor, but has been unsuccessful. He may propose to convert the entire building to residential use. Will need relief from parking requirements.

The Board noted that if the entire building is converted to residential use & it becomes a three-family structure, it may require residential sprinklers. Eric will check w/ Bldg. Dept. & Fire Prevention on this.

Informal - Lunn, 30 acre Westminster Hill Rd. parcel

Lewis Lunn and his engineer Russ Wilson presented concept plan dated Sept. 2016 for vacant 40 acre parcel on north side of Westminster Hill Rd. just past St. Jude Blvd. Parcel had previously been approved for a 156-unit >55 development. Plan showed an approx. 800-foot long cul-de-sac with 11 lots and a larger 18 ac. lot at the rear of the parcel which may be left as open space. Will need a waiver of the 500-foot long limit in Subdivision Regulations. Water supply may be an issue. There may need to be booster pumps or a water tower.

Wetlands shown on the parcel was from a delineation 10+ years ago; this will need to be re-checked.

Russ said they may go straight to a Definitive subdivision plan.

Nothing new on the proposed W. Fitchburg outdoor recreation proposal – still in the delineation, surveying, design phase. A traffic study is being done.

The Board agreed that parking situation for this meeting was a problem as attendees had to park quite a distance away. Other options for meeting space will be pursued.

Motion made & seconded to adjourn. Vote in favor.
Meeting adjourned: 9:30 p.m.

Next meeting: 10/18/16